

## Message Text

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47

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 H-01 USIA-06 DODE-00 SS-15 SP-02

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R 301645Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1562

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: SOCI, PFOR, CI, US

SUBJ: ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

REF: SANTIAGO 7655

1. SUMMARY. HOLY CROSS PROVINCIAL FATHER WILLIAM LEWERS CALLED ON AMBASSADOR DEC 27. CLEAR FROM CONVERSATION THAT IF ORDER CANNOT GET SCHOOL TURNED BACK, IT WANTS TO KEEP PRESSURE ON GOC BUT PREFERS TO WAIT FOR CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT OR POLICY RATHER THAN TO HAVE SCHOOL EXPROPRIATED. LEWERS MAY RECOMMEND ORDER ENTER CIVIL SUIT AGAINST GOC FOR RETURN OF SCHOOL TO HOLY CROSS CONTROL. AMBASSADOR DESCRIBED INFORMAL APPROACHES HE HAD MADE TO GOC WHILE HOLY CROSS WAS NEGOTIATING WITH IT, AND POSSIBILITY OF FORMAL REPRESENTATION IF INSTRUCTED. END SUMMARY.

2. BASED ON RECENT EXCHANGE OF PINOCHET-HESBURGH LETTERS (43\*53)), FATHER LEWERS WAS PESSIMISTIC ON CHANCES OF GOC ABANDONING ITS INTERVENTION AND RETURNING SCHOOL TO HOLY CROSS ORDER. SAID HE DID NOT INTEND TO APPROACH GOC DURING HIS VISIT AND WOULD WAIT FOR PINOCHET RESPONSE TO HESBURGH BEFORE DECIDING ON NEXT STEP. ASSUMING THE HARD LINE WOULD CONTINUE, HE WOULD THEN CONSIDER ASKING DEPT TO INTERCEDE FORMALLY, OR HAVING ORDER INSTITUTE CIVIL SUIT AGAINST GOC CHALLENGING LEGALITY OF INTERVENTION OF SCHOOL. ORDER'S CHILEAN LAWYER THOUGHT GOC HAD NO LEGAL

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AUTHORITY FOR INTERVENTION; FATHER LEWERS SAID HE DOUBTED

ORDER COULD WIN SUCH A CASE, BUT PUTTING IT IN THE COURTS COULD AVOID CONFRONTATION, PERHAPS STRING MATTER OUT UNTIL GOVT CHANGED LEADERSHIP OR POLICY AND SCHOOL COULD BE RETURNED. HE INDICATED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR AVOIDING GOC EXPROPRIATION AND AN EXPECTATION THAT IF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS SHOULD COME TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVT, PROBLEM COULD EASILY BE SOLVED.

3. FATHER LEWERS OPINED THAT ONLY A FEW POWERFUL FAMILIES, PERHAPS 50, HAD BEEN BEHIND INTERVENTION OF SCHOOL ORIGINALLY. GOVT HAD PREVENTED EXPRESSION OF SENTIMENTS BY MANY OTHER PARENTS WHO WANTED BASIC EDUCATION POLICY OF HOLY CROSS ORDER -- E. G. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS FROM ALL CLASSES OF POPULATION -- TO CONTINUE.

4. LEWERS ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT GOC MIGHT BE TRYING TO GET RID OF HOLY CROSS FATHERS, BY MOVING AGAINST INDIVIDUALS OVER PERIOD OF TIME. AS IT TURNED OUT, HE CITED ONLY CASE OF FATHER ROBERT PLASKER, WHICH WAS SPECIAL, AND ATTEMPT LAST WEEK OF SECURITY FORCES TO QUESTION SEMINARIAN (ROBERT NEIDHARDT) WHOSE RESIDENCE VISA HAD EXPIRED LONG AGO, AND WHOM THE ORDER GOT OUT OF CHILE ON SHORT NOTICE. FATHER LEWERS EXPRESSED HIS DEEP APPRECIATION FOR HELP OF EMBASSY CONSULAR OFFICERS IN THESE CASES. AID ALSO THAT MEMBERS OF ORDER ACT DISCREETLY IN CHILE AND HAVE ENGAGED IN NO ACTIVITIES GOC COULD PROPERLY CALL "EXTREMIST."

5. WITHOUT REFERENCE TO FATHER LEWERS' LETTER TO CONGRESSMAN BRADEMAS, AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED WHAT EMBASSY'S ROLE HAD BEEN SINCE ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL PROBLEM HAD ARISEN, AND NOTED THAT BY COMMON AGREEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS LOOKING TOWARD RETURN OF SCHOOL HAD BEEN CARRIED ON BY CHURCH AUTHORITIES, WHILE EMBASSY' PART HAD BEEN LIMITED TO REPEATED BUT INFORMAL REPRESENTATIONS WITH BOTH EDUCATION MINISTER ADM. CASTRO AND FOREIGN MINISTER. AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED TO FATHER LEWERS THAT THERE WAS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THIS PROCEDURE AND A FORMAL REPRESENTATION, MADE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPT, WHICH COULD LEAD TO DETAILED NEGOTIATION ON THE SUBJECT MATTER. IT HAD SEEMED TO US LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT EITHER HOLY CROSS OR THE EMBASSY, BUT NOT BOTH, SHOULD BE IN THIS POSITION AT ANY GIVEN TIME. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT DEPT REPRESENTATIONS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE ANY MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THOSE OF HOLY CROSS, BUT INDICATED EMBASSY QUITE PREPARED TO EMBARK ON THIS COURSE IF HOLY CROSS AND DEPT DESIRED.

6. COMMENT. CLEAR FROM THIS CONVERSATION THAT ALL THE

FOREGOING IS SUBJECT TO ANY RESULT WHICH MAY BE OBTAINED  
FROM CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN FATHER HESBURGH AND PRESIDENT  
PINOCHET. ASSUMING GOC IS UNYIELDING, FATHER LEWERS  
WOULD EVIDENTLY PREFER TO TEMPORIZE PENDING A POLITICAL  
CHANGE IN SANTIAGO THAN TO PRESS MATTER TO POINT WHERE  
FORMAL EXPROPRIATION COULD OCCUR. BELIEVE HE NOW UNDER-  
STANDS SOMEWHAT MORE CLEARLY WHAT THE HOLY CROSS OPTIONS  
ARE.  
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## Message Attributes

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